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ABSTRACT

Students must be informed about what is going on in the United States and the world. They must be able to understand, analyze, and evaluate what they hear and read. Newspaper and magazine editorials are excellent sources of argument and information for class study. Genuine understanding of written material requires thinking during reading. Generally, American students have little understanding of what they read and lack basic information or cultural literacy. Using newspaper editorials, students learn to identify and reconstruct an argument, and to evaluate it. Some techniques of argument analysis must occur at the didactic stage, through lecture. During the tactical stage, students engage actively in group readings and editorial analyses. In the analytic stage, students begin to apply the intellectual skills and abilities which they eventually will be required to use on their own. In the holistic stage, students have the opportunity to exercise and sharpen their new analytic skills in a realistic way. The exemplary stage offers students the instructor as an example of what is expected of the students. The instructor must become adept at thinking aloud and displaying how to reason things through. Such techniques plunge students into the world of current events while at the same time teaching them critical thinking skills. Fifteen notes are included. Three appendixes (two newspaper editorials and a Hirschean reading exercise) are attached. (SG)

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Barbara Forrest

ED 368 001

Back to Basics:

The Use of Newspapers and Other Print Media to Teach

Analytic Reading, Writing, and Reasoning

Robert Reich, in *The Work of Nations*, stresses the growing need to educate people to become "symbolic analysts," who specialize in trading on the world market what he terms "the manipulations of symbols--data, words, oral and visual representations."[1] He says that

> Symbolic analysts solve, identify, and broker problems by manipulating symbols. They simplify reality into abstract images that can be rearranged, juggled, experimented with, communicated to other specialists, and then, eventually, transformed back into reality. The manipulations are done with analytic tools, sharpened by experience. The tools may be mathematical algorithms, legal arguments, financial gimmicks, scientific principles, psychological insights about how to persuade or to amuse, systems of induction or deduction, or any other set of techniques for doing conceptual puzzles."[2]

Reich remarks with dismay upon the insistent demand by those seeking educational reform that we go "back to basics."[3] However, a *basic requirement* that we absolutely cannot do without, and the importance of which we must impress upon students, is the requirement that they be informed about what is going on in the country and the world. The manipulation of

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[1]Robert Reich, *The Work of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st-Century Capitalism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 177.

[2]Ibid., 178.

[3]Ibid., 227.

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symbols on the global scale which Reich envisions will be of limited benefit to employers and workers if it is not done within the framework of an intelligent understanding of what is going on both around and beyond them. Students, who will be both workers and employers, must be *intelligent* symbolic analysts. They must become *informed* critical thinkers, and there are three capabilities vital to critical thinking which they must acquire--they must **understand**, **analyze**, and **evaluate** what they hear and what they read.

(1) Students must **understand** what they read and hear. Before they can go a single step toward critically evaluating written or spoken material, they must be held responsible for knowing what a writer or speaker is saying. This skill must begin with concentration on *written* material which the student has sufficient time to consider. They must understand the meanings of individual words, as well as historical and literary references. They must understand references to other current events mentioned in the editorials.

(2) Students must learn to **analyze**. This means ascertaining what someone implies as well as what he says explicitly. It means developing a sensitivity to nuance, recognizing indirect references, detecting hidden assumptions, and inserting unstated conclusions in an argument.

(3) Once these first two capabilities are acquired, students can then learn to **evaluate** someone else's argument. This means detecting fallacious reasoning and ambiguous, vague, or false premises. It means formulating an intelligent judgment about whether an argument is genuinely persuasive, whether it is reasonable, even if the student does not ultimately agree with the author's position.

How can students become informed about regional, national, and global affairs while at the same time acquiring these three capabilities? I recommend returning to the basics in order to help students learn to become better critical thinkers. One of the best approaches, I believe,

is the study of the print media. I have long been an advocate of the view that newspapers and other print media such as magazines are really textbooks. Newspapers and magazines are basic sources of both information and argumentation of which we should make systematic use. Most specifically, I am referring to the use of newspaper and magazine *editorials* as an excellent source of both arguments and information.[4] Although newspapers and magazines can be used to acquaint students with virtually all aspects of the current global situation, one learns from them much more than merely what is happening in the world. From them one can learn--and to a very useful extent teach--history, political science, economics, mathematics, English composition, social science, natural science, and . . . critical thinking.

However, despite my recommendation that we return to the basics, I am not advocating the reliance strictly upon rote learning and memorization. The approach to critical thinking I wish to recommend combines the recommendations of both E. D. Hirsch[5] and Richard Paul.[6] Consistent with Hirsch, who emphasizes the need for "cultural literacy," my approach recognizes the importance, up to a point, of having a stock of information, not *all* of which must--or even can sometimes--be deeply or completely understood. We can operate usefully on many occasions with recalled items of information that fit into a general framework of concepts which can in turn be particularized by facts that are isolated from their full contexts. For example, one need not know everything about Richard III to understand a writer's reference to him; sometimes, it suffices to know that he was a disreputable English king who lived several

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[4]A very valuable account of how this can be done is Albert Hayward's article "Reconstructing Arguments from Editorials" (*Teaching Philosophy*, March 1986).

[5]E. D. Hirsch, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987).

[6]Richard Paul, *Critical Thinking: What Every Person Needs to Know to Survive in a Rapidly Changing World*, Rev. 2d ed., ed. A. J. A. Binker (Santa Rosa, CA: Foundation for Critical Thinking, 1992).

hundred years ago, a fact which enables one to grasp the sense of a reference to him in a piece which is not really *about* him.[7] Although a sound knowledge of history is certainly both desirable and necessary, students need not know a great deal about Vladimir Lenin[8] for many purposes; however, when they do encounter a reference to him, it helps even if they know only that Lenin played the most decisive role in Russia's communist revolution. If students do not know even that, there is sometimes a great deal which, by not knowing *only* that, they will also miss.

Consistent with Paul, who advocates critical thinking as a substitute for rote learning and mere accumulation of information, I believe that genuine understanding of written material—understanding of the kind achieved by people who can think as they read—is the best kind of learning. It is the kind we should want to see every student be able to do. But I do not believe that this kind of learning can even take place without a student's first having acquired a certain minimum stock of information, even if it comes initially through channels which involve some degree of dependence by the student upon some authoritative source. Everyone at every stage of education must sometimes be a recipient, acquiring information in a receptive manner. It is up to those of us who can think and learn critically to ensure that, to the extent students must rely upon authoritative sources at certain points in their education, these sources are accurate and reliable. This can be done, and the fact that sometimes students acquire

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[7]The point of this example, as seen in Appendix A (Lance Morrow, "Essay: When Artists Distort History," *Time*, 23 December 1991, 84), is that even non-esoteric literature written for laymen, such as the weekly "Essay" in *Time*, requires familiarity with a wide variety of terms and references for even the most basic comprehension of its content.

[8]This example comes from my university ethics classes. Of two recent classes of university students, about fifty people, only one even recognized the name "Lenin." That one identified Lenin as "some Russian guy." Clearly, whatever point I was making in which I mentioned Lenin was lost on these two classes.

information which is chiefly the fruit of someone else's efforts does not mean that they have learned nothing. Even if one agrees with Paul (and I do) that we do not want students to remain at this stage of dependency or occupy it for most of their educational lives, we need not see it as an intrinsically harmful way of getting information. Students cannot, and cannot be expected to, come by everything they know by means of original critical spadework.

Even though Paul believes Hirsch's solution to the problem of cultural literacy is essentially misdirected, I do not think these two thinkers are diametrically opposed to one another in their views of what is needed to fix what is wrong with today's students.[9] Rather, I think both advocate solutions which together are essential to the educational process; furthermore, with respect to student performance and preparedness for both simple and higher-order thinking tasks, I think we have reached a distressing point at which we must pay much more attention to the recommendations of E. D. Hirsch than Paul is willing to allow. *Students' lack of basic information is acute.* For some time now, the problem has been that even students from affluent homes and schools cannot be counted upon to possess the most basic information needed to understand the simplest reading assignments, much less to think critically about what they have read. American students, by and large, have little real understanding of most of what they read. Teachers from all disciplines at the highest levels of education were bewailing their students' lack of cultural literacy even before Hirsch's book came out. My argument is that both Hirsch and Paul are right--not that possessing information can in itself supplant the need for critical thinking, but that critical thinking cannot be done without information. The reason, very simply, is that one cannot understand another's

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[9]Richard Paul, "Critical and Cultural Literacy: Where E. D. Hirsch Goes Wrong," in *Critical Thinking: What Every Person Needs to Know to Survive in a Rapidly Changing World*, Rev. 2d ed., ed. A. J. A. Binker (Santa Rosa, CA: Foundation for Critical Thinking, 1992), 527-33.

argument without knowing the meanings of all terms and understanding all references and allusions which occur in and surround the argument, as in a newspaper editorial, for instance.

In the early seventies, when I was an undergraduate working on my teaching certification and taking education courses, there was a great deal of emphasis on teaching students "how to learn" as opposed to trying simply to pack their heads full of information. The rationale was that information was increasing and the world was changing so rapidly that it did little good for them to memorize anything. All they really needed to know was how to get information and where to go for it. There is much truth in the advocacy of learning how to learn; however, I think this methodological approach to learning was overemphasized at the expense of what students actually accumulated and remembered. Twenty-five years later, we are seeing the results of too little attention to *how much* students know. Without abandoning the very real need for teaching students effective methodological skills, educators must begin to reemphasize the importance of *content.* Students do need a certain amount of information, and they do need to become critical thinkers. I am offering a way to enable them to improve in both respects.

The use of newspaper editorials in the teaching of critical thinking does what both Hirsch and Paul, respectively, want to see done. In keeping with Paul's emphasis on the importance of critical thinking, students are required to identify and reconstruct an argument in order to be able consequently to evaluate it. In keeping with Hirsch's emphasis on the need for information, in order even to read an editorial completely, students are required to look up words, find the meanings of references, allusions, and metaphors (or if they do not, to recognize the consequent gaps in their ability to identify and consider the argument). The study of newspaper editorials teaches close, careful reading, stresses clear writing and the necessity of revision through the paraphrasing of arguments, and produces an increased vocabulary. As the study of the editorials progresses, the instructor as well will find herself literally *having* to do many of the things

which are emphasized in the critical thinking workshops offered by the Foundation for Critical Thinking.[10]

(1) Teaching with editorials requires students to "read for themselves, actively and analytically." Students are left for the most part on their own with the editorials after a few introductory practice sessions with the instructor. There is no one around to spoon feed them. Feedback comes from the instructor after the work is graded, with the expectation that students will learn from this feedback and apply it to the next assignment.

(2) The instructor is cultivating critical reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students must learn to read for precision. They must reconstruct arguments fairly and accurately, an exercise requiring precise writing. They must verbally defend their paraphrasing and reconstruction of arguments, requiring thought and precision in their choice of words. Finally, students must listen critically to the instructor when challenged to compare the instructor's paraphrasing and reconstruction of arguments with the originals found in the editorials. The instructor must have a solid grasp of language and of the possibilities of its use in a wide variety of contexts; this requires an extensive background of reading as well as the ongoing habit of wide reading on the part of the instructor.

(3) The instructor must think aloud in front of students, so that students learn by example how analysis, reconstruction, and evaluation of arguments are done. The instructor makes himself vulnerable to student criticism during this exercise and must learn to respond to it.

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[10]"Practical Workshops Revitalize Teaching and Learning," *Critical Thinking*, Spring 1993, 34.

(4) The instructor must question students according to the Socratic method. Often students do not recognize that they are speaking in generalities or that their thinking is inconsistent. Questioning them Socratically forces them, albeit with some degree of frustration, to be responsible themselves for what they say and to be specific.

(5) The instructor is constantly challenged to find pertinent, appropriate concrete examples to illustrate abstract ideas encountered in the editorials.

(6) The instructor must require regular writing in the form of paraphrased reconstructions of editorial arguments, but this is the kind of assignment which can be graded fairly quickly. The assignments require the intense application of critical reading and writing skills, but are not necessarily lengthy.[11]

(7) The assignments required by the instructor lend themselves well to the use of explicit standards of evaluation. The nature of the assignments requires students to remain conscious of these standards while they are working. This consciousness is reinforced during the subsequent classroom analysis of the editorials.

Using editorials to teach critical thinking also activates the use of virtually every stage of teaching and learning outlined by the Center for Critical Thinking.[12]

(1) A small proportion of instruction necessarily occurs at the ***didactic stage***. Some of the techniques of argument analysis must be introduced through lectures and demonstrations. In addition, since the periods devoted to the analysis of editorials is alternated with the usual textbook readings and exercises, such as those on informal

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[11]See Appendix C.

[12]"Practical Workshops Revitalize Teaching and Learning," 27.

fallacies, a certain amount of didactic explanation of these is required. This is minimal, however. The student cannot remain long at this stage because *early* involvement with the material is the key to *active* involvement, and the nature of the assignments necessitates a good deal of student self-reliance.

(2) During the ***tactical stage***, the instructor involves students in group readings and analyses of editorials and essays (such as the weekly "Essay" in *Time* magazine). This usually arouses student interest quickly and promotes active involvement in the material, particularly since the material is timely and relevant to current events.

(3) The ***analytic stage***, during which "the teacher designs instruction so that students actively use specific intellectual skills and abilities to analyze various dimensions of the content," actually begins during the tactical stage. While analyzing an editorial in order to identify the author's argument, students must begin to apply the intellectual skills and abilities which they will quickly be required to use on their own for the completion of their assignments. During the analysis of any given editorial, they inevitably learn something of the subject of the editorial, as well as new words and concepts, while simultaneously applying the analytical skills needed to identify the argument.

(4) Since textbook exercises, which tend to be short and disconnected from any meaningful context, offer students little opportunity to test their skills in a realistic way, the analysis of newspaper editorials provides students with an opportunity to exercise and sharpen their new analytic skills on material which is much more true-to-life for them. At this point they are in the ***holistic stage*** of learning. This is also the point at which other newspaper items, such as letters to the editor, can be introduced as items to be analyzed. These are a wonderful source

of fallacies, committed by real people with real concerns, on which students can test what they have learned from the text. In newspaper editorials, students typically see examples of very good reasoning which is "clear, accurate, precise, relevant, complete, and consistent."[13] In letters to the editor, on the other hand, they often see the kinds of thinking which they must learn to avoid.

(5) Since every editorial which is analyzed by the students independently (a minimum of ten for credit) is also discussed in class, and since the instructor should periodically bring to class some editorials which have not been previously analyzed either by the class or the instructor, this portion of what is taught and learned will take place at the ***exemplary stage***. The instructor becomes an example of what she wants the students to learn to do. She must become adept at "thinking aloud, slowly and carefully, in front of the students, displaying realistically how one can reason things through in learning."[14] The teacher explains how to read and analyze an editorial, how to identify the argument, how to work through the process of producing the same argument in different words (her own in this case), and how to evaluate it. Students learn what to do by actually listening to the teacher do it.

There is nothing earthshaking about this approach to teaching critical thinking. It combines the study of informal, textbook logic, from which students learn about the different types of arguments and the ways in which they can go wrong, with the study of real arguments. The advantage of combining what students learn from the text with the regular analysis of editorials and other printed material is that they are constantly engaging themselves in a normal, everyday activity in which can be found numerous examples of exactly what they are studying. Materials are easily available; all the instructor has to do is subscribe to a good

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[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

regional newspaper and a few magazines, which most of us do anyway, in order to ensure a steady source of effective, up-to-date learning materials at no extra expense. Any teacher who reads her own newspapers and magazines can acquire valuable materials for teaching critical thinking skills in a way which plunges students into the world of current events at the same time, with the result that by the time the course is completed, they will be both wiser and more informed.[15]

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[15]This is an expanded version of a paper presented in August 1993 at the Thirteenth Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking and Educational Reform at Sonoma State University.

Appendix A*

"When Artists Distort History"

by

Lance Morrow

Time

December 23, 1991

King Richard III was a monster. He poisoned his wife, stole the throne from his two young nephews and ordered them to be smothered in the Tower of London. Richard was a sort of Antichrist the King—"that bottled spider, that pois'nous bunch-back'd toad."

Anyway, that was Shakespeare's version. Shakespeare did what the playwright does: he turned history into a vivid, articulate, organized dream—repeatable nightly. He put the crouchback on stage, and sold tickets.

And who would say that the real Richard known to family and friends was not identical to Shakespeare's memorably loathsome creation? The actual Richard went dimming into the past and vanished. When all the eyewitnesses are gone, the artist's imagination begins to conjure.

Variations on the King Richard Effect are at work in Oliver Stone's *JFK*. *Richard III* was art, but it was propaganda too. Shakespeare took the details of his plot from Tudor historians who wanted to blacken Richard's name. Several centuries passed before other historians began to write about Richard's

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* I use this essay in a "Hirschean Reading Exercise" on the first day of class in order to impress upon students the importance of having a stock of information from which to draw in order to understand even printed material written for a popular audience. After reading the essay, students are asked to select every term, name, and literary or historical reference which they do not know, but which they must know in order to understand this essay. I use this piece because it is rich in vocabulary as well as historical and literary references. (Copyright 1991 Time, Inc. Reprinted by permission.)

virtues and suggest that he may have been a victim of Tudor malice and what is the cleverest conspiracy of all: art.

JFK is a long and powerful harangue about the death of the man Stone keeps calling "the slain young king." What are the rules of Stone's game? Is Stone functioning as commercial entertainer? Propagandist? Documentary filmmaker? Historian? Journalist? Fantasist? Sensationalist? Paranoid conspiracy-monger? Lone hero crusading for the truth against a venal Establishment? Answer: some of the above.

The first superficial effect of *JFK* is to raise angry little scruples like welts in the conscience. Wouldn't it be absurd if a generation of younger Americans, with no memory of 1963, were to form their ideas about John Kennedy's assassination from Oliver Stone's report of it? But worse things have happened—including, perhaps, the Warren Commission report.

Stone's movie and the Warren report are interestingly symmetrical: the Warren Commission was stolidly, one might say pathologically, unsuspicious, while in every scene of the Stone film conspiracy theories writhe underfoot like snakes. In a strange way, the two reports balance one another out. It may be ridiculous to accord Stone's movie a status coequal with the Warren report. On the other hand, the Warren report has endured through the years as a monolith of obscure suppression, a smooth tomb of denial. Stone's movie, for all its wild gesticulations, at least refreshes the memory and gets a long-cold curiosity and contempt glowing again.

The fecklessness of the Warren report somehow makes one less indignant about Stone's methods and the 500 kitchen sinks that he has heaved into his story. His technique is admirable as storytelling and now and then preposterous as historical inquiry. But why should the American people expect a moviemaker to assume responsibility for producing the last word on the Kennedy assassination when the government, historians and news media have all pursued the subject so imperfectly?

Stone uses a suspect, mongrel art form, and *JFK* raises the familiar ethical and historical problems of docudrama. but so what? Artists have always used public events as raw material, have taken history into their imaginations and transformed it. The fall of Troy vanished into the *Iliad.* The Battle of Borodino found its most memorable permanence in Tolstoy's imagining of it in *War and Peace.*

Especially in a world of insatiable electronic storytelling, real history procreates, endlessly conjuring new versions of itself. Public life has become a metaphysical breeder of fictions. Watergate became an almost continuous television miniseries—although it is interesting that the movie of Woodward and Bernstein's *All the President's Men* stayed close to the known facts and, unlike *JFK*, did not validate dark conjecture.

Some public figures have a story magic, and some do not. Richard Nixon possesses an indefinable, discomfited dark gleam that somehow fascinates. and John Kennedy, despite everything, still has the bright glamour that works best of all. Works, that is, except when the subject is his assassination. That may be a matter still too sacred, too raw and unassimilated. The long American passivity about the death in Dallas may be a sort of hypnosis—or a grief that hardened into a will not to know. Do not let daylight in upon magic.

Why is Stone's movie different from any other imaginative treatment of history? Is it because the assassination of John Kennedy was so traumatic, the baby boomers' End of Childhood? Or that Americans have enshrined it as official tragedy, a title that confers immunity from profane revisionists who would reopen the grave? Are artists and moviemakers by such logic enjoined from stories about the Holocaust? The Holocaust, of course, is known from the outset to be a satanic plot. For some reason—a native individualism, maybe—many Americans resist dark theories about J.F.K.'s death, and think those retailing them are peddling foreign, anarchist goods. Real Americans hate conspiracies as something unclean.

Perhaps the memory of the assassination is simply too fresh. An outraged movie like Stone's intrudes upon a semipermanent mourning. Maybe the subject should be embargoed for some period of time, withheld from artists and entertainers, in the same way the Catholic Church once declined to consider sainthood until the person in question had been dead for 50 years.

No: better to opt for information and conjecture and the exhumation of all theories. Let a hundred flowers bloom, even if some of them are poisonous and paranoid. A culture is what it remembers, and what it knows.

Appendix B

A Hirschean Reading Exercise: Essential Terms and References*

Terms

1. Antichrist
2. bunchback'd
3. crouchback
4. loathsome
5. conjure
6. malice
7. harangue
8. fantasist
9. sensationalist
10. conspiracy-monger
11. venal
12. scruples
13. welts
14. symmetrical
15. stolidly
16. pathologically
17. writhe
18. coequal
19. monolith
20. obscure
21. suppression
22. gesticulations
23. fecklessness
24 kitchen sinks
25. mongrel
26. docudrama
27. insatiable
28. procreates
29. metaphysical
30. conjecture
31. discomfited
32. unassimilated
33. passivity
34. baby boomers
35. profane
36. revisionism
37. enjoined
38. native individualism
39. anarchist
40. exhumation

Historical References

41. Richard III
42. Tower of London
43. Tudor
44. Warren Commission
45. Warren Comm. Report
46. Troy
47. Battle of Borodino
48. Watergate
49. Woodward and Bernstein
50. Holocaust
51. "Let a hundred flowers bloom."

Literary References

52. *Richard III*
53. *Iliad*
54. Tolstoy
55. *War and Peace*
56. "Do not let daylight in upon magic."

Contemporary References

57. "All the President's Men"

*This list of terms, names, and historical references was compiled by one university-level critical thinking class after a first reading of the *Time* essay in Appendix A. Their instructions were to flag each word or term they did not understand and each name, historical reference, or literary reference they did not know.

Appendix C*

"Marshall Plan II"

New Orleans Times-Picayune

Sunday, January 26, 1992

After World War II and the collapse of the Axis powers left Europe devastated, the victorious allies—read the United States—moved to help the ruined battlefield nations rebuild peaceful nations and economies. They understood that the devastation of World War I, compounded by the vindictive peace of Versailles, had set the stage for and created the causes of the second world war. They were determined not to repeat that episode of history. The result: the Marshall Plan.

Now the end of the Cold War has brought the collapse of the Soviet Union, an aggressive empire that roiled and threatened most of the world for more than 40 years, into 12 separate nations, all economically devastated and politically uncertain. **It is not only appropriate but urgent that the victorious free world mount a similar rescue mission. The result: Operation Provide Hope.**

That U.S. operation pursues the agreement by 47 nations called to a meeting in Washington by Secretary of State James A. Baker III. They included the world's major economic powers, and while each nation will decide its own contribution, there will be much coordination and a tracking of overall effectiveness by at least two more conferences.

The first U.S. contributions will come in about three weeks, with emergency medicine and food shipped to the former Soviet republics. This is to be followed by consultation on broader medical

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* This is the kind of newspaper editorial which my students routinely analyze in order to reconstruct the argument which the editorial contains. The conclusion of this editorial's argument is in underlined, bold print, and the premises are in bold brackets. Following the editorial is my reconstruction of the argument which my students use as a model for their own work. (Copyright 1992 Times-Picayune. Reprinted by permission.)

assistance, 3,000 volunteer farm workers and training programs in grassroots democracy, leadership and management.

The overall effort, in Mr. Baker's term, is "global," with individual nations providing money and goods, at this point, to get the crippled nations through the winter and past the difficult initial period of their transition to a more rational economic system. President Bush has pledged $645 million in new U.S. aid; the United States has already pledged more than $5 billion in various forms of assistance, most of it as agricultural credits that will benefit U.S. farmers.

According to the European Community, more than $78 billion in aid has already gone to the former Soviet republics, nearly $45 billion of it from Germany. Since 1990, the ED and its members have pledged about 75 percent of the total Western aid of nearly $80 billion in credits, loan guarantees and other types of loans.

[But beyond this emergency aid, said Elizabeth Gigou, French minister for European Affairs, "There is a problem infinitely more vast—the total reconstruction of these countries' economies." That is essential to stabilizing their budding democratic political systems.] P1

An example: Russia's Boris Yeltsin, wildly popular for his politics, has suddenly plunged in esteem because his economic policy is inevitably raising prices and pinching the public as it tries to shift from communist central planning to a private free market. [An uprising that threatens or overturns the government would be a disaster.] P2

[The whole world has a stake in the success of the successor states of the former communist superpower in reforming their economics and politics.] P3 [Because they have so little experience and so few resources, the process will be a fragile one. But help from former adversaries will help keep the process peaceful while they struggle toward their goal.] P4

Paraphrase/Reconstruction of Argument

"Marshall Plan II"--Times-Picayune, Sunday, Jan. 26, 1992, p. B6

P 1 The rebuilding of these countries' economies, devastated by communism, is vitally necessary to ensuring that their newly formed democratic governments become stable and secure.

P 2 A revolt that destabilizes or destroys the government, as could happen in Russia, would be irreparably harmful to the possibility of stable democratic government.

P 3 It is in the best interests of the entire world that the nations which have emerged from the breakup of the Soviet Union succeed in instituting democratic government and market economies.

P 4 Although, with little experience in building these new political and economic systems and so few resources to call upon, the process of reform could easily break down in these countries, assistance from their former enemies will help to ensure peace while they struggle toward democracy and capitalism.

Concl.: The West, which emerged as the winner in the Cold War, not only should but absolutely must provide to the twelve separate nations created by the breakup of the Soviet Union the kind of economic and humanitarian aid which the allies--led by the United States--gave to Europe under the Marshall Plan.